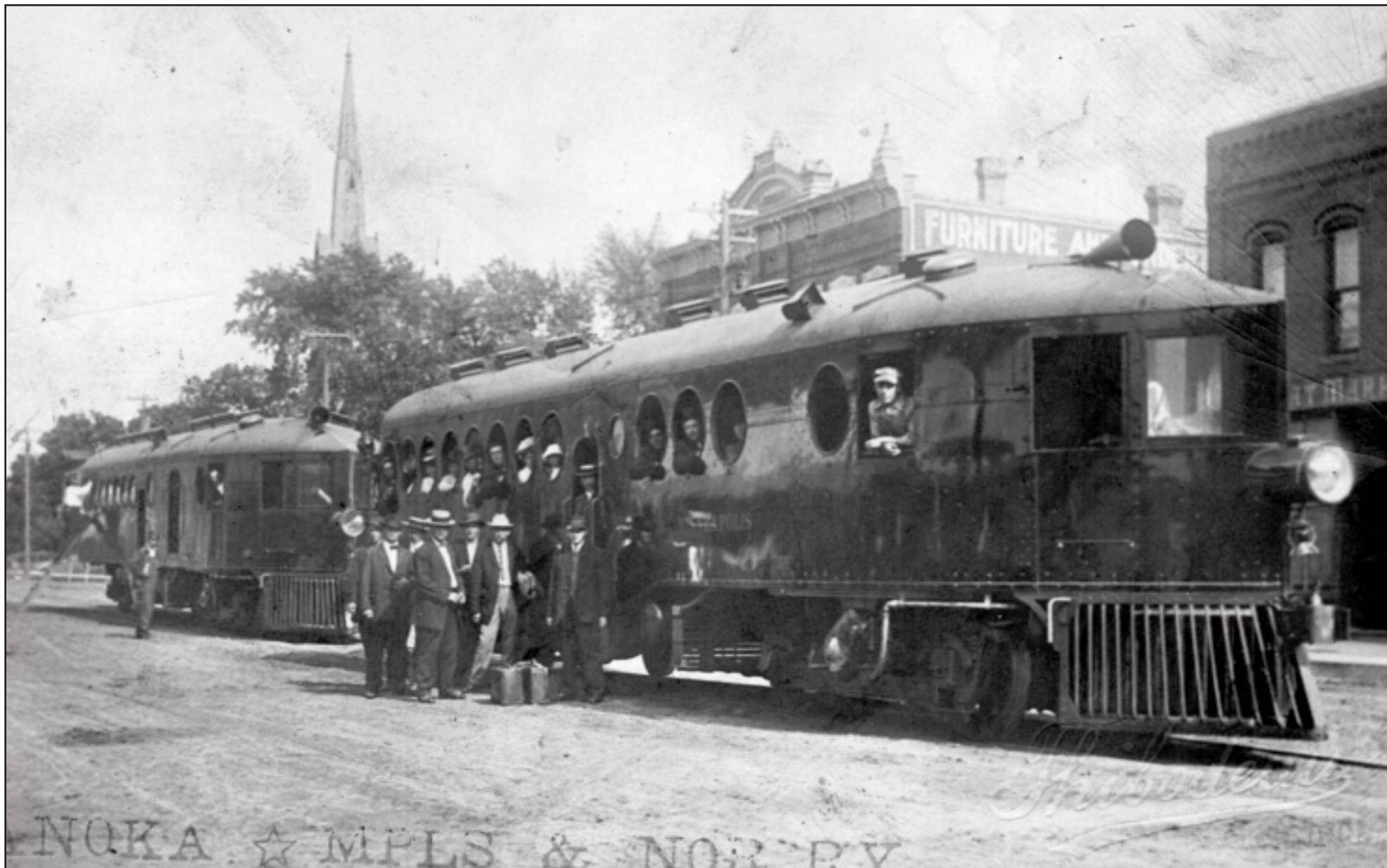




Spring 2020





Both of the Minneapolis & Northern's gas-mechanical McKeen motor cars appeared on Anoka's Main Street to celebrate the line's opening on June 10, 1913. Hubodeau photo.

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Corrections & new info

The lower right photo on page 16 of the Winter 2020 issue looks south on Marquette Avenue, not 2nd Avenue S.

On the rear cover the streetcar is passing 5th Avenue S., not 5th Street.

**The Anoka Line, Part 1
1909-1943**

-Russell Olson and Aaron Isaacs



Editor's note: This issue is an edited version of Russ Olson's chapter from Electric Railways of Minnesota, published in 1976, with additional info from his subsequent research. Previously unpublished material including photos has been added.

Located at the junction of the Mississippi and Rum Rivers, Anoka was established in the 1840's as a fur trading site; by the 1860's it had become an important lumber milling town. The St. Paul & Pacific RR. (later Great Northern) completed the first portion of its line to St. Cloud this far in 1864. The Northern Pacific built directly alongside the GN in 1884. By 1910 the two railroads connected Anoka with Minneapolis with four daily northbound and six daily southbound trips. Travel time was 40-45 minutes.

Front cover: The Anoka line was new and still prosperous when this photo was taken at the Anoka depot. Behind it is the Lincoln Mill, the line's most important shipper. Co-Mo Company photo.

Flour milling became an important industry and remained so for many years. There were many proposals to connect Anoka and Minneapolis with something other than the steam railroads. All of these proposals involved constructing a line on the west side of the Mississippi River, from as far east as Camden Place to as far west as Robbinsdale and Osseo. (In 1906 auto buses of the Anoka & Minneapolis Transportation Co. were operating five round trips per day from Washington and Hennepin Avenues in Minneapolis to Anoka.) Municipal opposition prevented actual construction.

Minneapolis & Northern Ry.

Attention shifted to the east side of the Mississippi River which was sandier and less fertile, and consequently less populated. The Anoka-Minneapolis Suburban Ry. was incorporated in March, 1909, and succeeded in securing some franchises. The Minneapolis & Northern Railway was incorporated in Maine during 1912; in July of that year it acquired all of the franchises of the A-MS Ry. and was authorized to do business within Minnesota in August. The M&N was able to secure sufficient funds to begin construction of the line; J.L. Weaver of Anoka began grading from Fridley with several teams. Right-of-way through Fridley, Coon Rapids and Anoka was completely secured by December, 1912. Bridges were under construction over Rice Creek, Hoyt's Creek and Coon Creek. It was reported that due to the unavailability of electricity a decision had been made to use gasoline-mechanical passenger motor cars. Construction of the 14.74 mile line was completed May 30, 1913. Trackage rights of .65 miles were obtained over the Soo Line Ry. from a connection at 34th Ave. N.E. and Marshall St. across

the Mississippi River bridge to 42nd Ave. N. and Washington Ave. N. (Camden Place), in Minneapolis. The original intent was for the trackage rights to extend to the Soo's downtown Minneapolis depot, but that didn't happen. Instead passengers transferred at Camden to the N. Washington Avenue streetcar line to reach downtown.

One record stated freight service was begun January 25, 1913, between 34th Ave. N.E., Minneapolis, and Coon Rapids to aid in building the Coon Creek dam, using a small steam locomotive.

The first passenger motor car arrived in Minneapolis on May 14, 1913. The design selected was that of the McKeen Motor Car Co. of Omaha, Nebraska (see inside front cover). This type of car had been developed by William R. McKeen, Jr., Superintendent of Motive Power for the Union Pacific RR in 1905. During that year he designed and built a gasoline mechanical passenger motor car in the railroad's Omaha shops. As a result a number of these cars were built in the following three years and used to replace steam powered trains on lightly traveled branch lines of the U. P. RR. In 1908, E. H. Harriman, who controlled both the Union Pacific and Southern Pacific Railroads, financed the McKeen Motor Car Co. and commercial production for other railroads was begun in an old shop building in Omaha. The distinctive features of the design were:

(1) all steel body with pointed front end, round rear end, porthole windows and center entrances;

(2) 200 h.p. marine type gasoline engine mounted crosswise on the front truck with a big flywheel protruding beyond the left side truck frame;

(3) engine geared only to the front

axle which had 42" diameter wheels, the rear axle of the front truck having 33" diameter wheels; and

(4) chain drive, air clutch, and two speed (low-high) transmission. There was no reverse gear. To back up it was necessary to stop the engine, manually shift the camshaft by means of a lever on the sliding camshaft, and re-start the engine in the opposite direction.

The M&N purchased two 55' long passenger motor cars in 1913 and named them "Minneapolis" and "Anoka".

The line was opened for regular service on June 10, 1913; a celebration was held the next day at which officials of Minneapolis, Anoka and the M&N attended. The population of Anoka at this time was 3,972 persons. The fare was 2 cents per mile or 30 cents total, one-way. The first regular schedule operated was: Leave Anoka: 7:00 and 11:00 A.M.; 1:00, 4:00 and 7:00 P.M.; and Leave Minneapolis: 8:00 and 11:00 A.M.; 2:10, 4:00 and 11:30 P.M.

The schedule effective June 25, 1913, was considerably expanded: Leave Anoka: 7:00 A.M., 9:30 A.M., 1:00 P.M., 4:00 P.M., 7:00 P.M., and 9:15 P.M. Daily; 11:00 A.M. 2:10 P.M., 3:00 P.M., and 5:00 P.M. Sundays only; and Leave Minneapolis: 8:00 A.M., 11:00 A.M., 2:10 P.M., 6:00 P.M., 8:00 P.M. and 11:30 P.M. Daily; 9:30 A.M., 1:00 P.M., 3:00 P.M., 5:00 P.M., and 7:00 P.M. Sundays only.

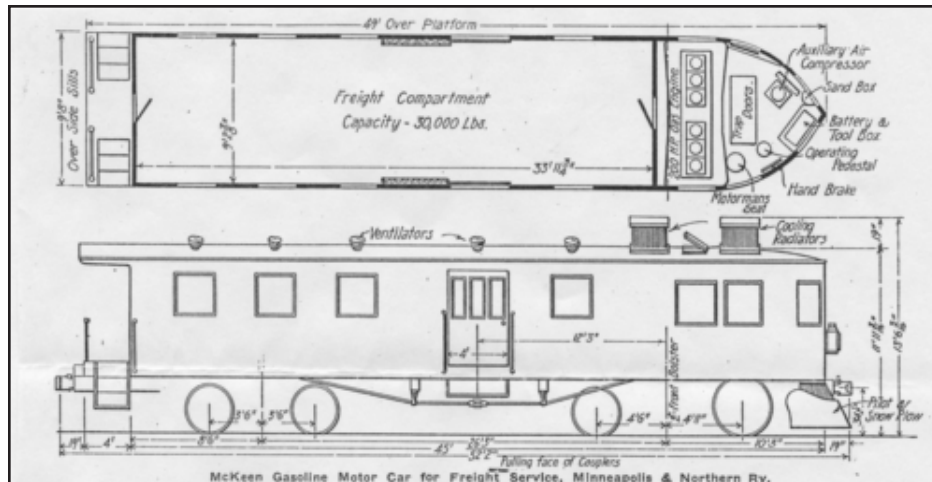
During July, 1913, it was reported that construction had started on the first shop building, on 7th Ave. and Main St. at the Anoka wye. During July and August the Davis Block on Main St. in Anoka was being remodeled for use as a depot.

The line was also attempting to develop freight traffic. In July, 1913, it was announced that a siding was to be constructed at the Anoka wye for freight service. For the planned freight



The McKeen locomotives were obscure. Above is the only known photo of the short-lived single trucker.

Below: We have two poor quality photos of the replacement locomotive, but it's better illustrated with this plan view from a 1914 trade magazine.



operations a gasoline-mechanical 200 hp freight locomotive was acquired from the McKeen Motor Car Co.; it

arrived in Anoka in July, 1913, a rather unusual piece of equipment: It rode on a single McKeen power truck and was

only 17 feet long. Because of the single truck it was unstable and "acted like a rocking horse". It was wrecked in a derailment in January 1914.

The M&N went back McKeen for a replacement, which in 1914 turned out a more conventional freight version of the passenger car design. The body had the usual pointed front end, but differed with an open rear platform, and square windows at intervals. During periods of heavy passenger traffic removable seats and chairs could be installed for transporting passengers.

The M&N earned the notable distinction of being the first railroad in the U. S. operating both freight and passenger service exclusively with McKeen Motor Car Co. equipment. During October a freight car was fitted up at the Anoka wye for the use of potato buyers. On December 26, 1913, it was announced that arrangements

had been completed to haul freight from the Soo Line freight depot in Minneapolis to the Anoka wye. M&N also built a spur track to the construction site of the Coon Rapids Dam, being built across the Mississippi during 1913-1914 by the Northern Mississippi Power Co.; 500 workmen were engaged which provided M & N with considerable passenger traffic and some freight traffic as well.

Offices of the M&N were originally located at 839 Metropolitan Life Building in Minneapolis but were moved in 1913 to 3900 Washington Ave. N. near the Camden Place terminal.

Advertising promoted the "East Shore Country" through which the line ran and "the smokeless, sootless route to Minneapolis, the only one of its kind with all-steel cars finished in mahogany". Some trips were added to the schedule in September, some dropped in October, and then drastically cutback in November. The local newspaper reported that the M&N was hardly living up to expectations.

The McKen passenger motor cars were reported as being fast and roomy, but the sway of the rear end on the bumpy and crooked track made many people uncomfortable. The strain of the powerful engine and heavy car combined with the shocks transmitted from the uneven and rough track proved too much for the clutch, creating no end of mechanical trouble. The engines proved extremely difficult to start in the cold Minnesota winter weather. Engine cooling coils were mounted under the floor and tended to freeze easily when cars were stored outside in cold weather. A master mechanic and three helpers were employed at the shop in Anoka. Newspaper articles indicate the trying times experienced by the struggling little railroad: 2,000 to 3,000 gallons of

gasoline were lost one night due to a leak in the newly installed storage tank.

The 1:00 P.M. train from Anoka was wrecked about 1:15 P.M. at Gibb's farm just beyond Power's station, about 3 miles from Anoka. The first gasoline freight locomotive was pulling a rented Soo Line passenger coach as both passenger motor cars were out of service at the time. Owing to the freight motor's short wheelbase it was not sufficiently stable to handle heavy loads and acted like a rocking horse at the least provocation. The company was dissatisfied with it but as no other motive power was available its use was necessary. Just east of the driveway at the farm, the loco began to buck and kick; within 100' it left the track entirely, dived into the ditch on the north side of the track, stopped at a right angle to the track and tipped over on its side. The passenger coach remained on the track, coasting about a block before it stopped. The twelve passengers (one source reported 30) were uninjured. A Soo Line steam locomotive hauled the coach to Minneapolis.

Financial troubles came almost immediately. The tightness of the bond market prevented the M&N from selling its bonds; as a result contractors' claims could not be paid. The death of J. F. O'Neil, general contractor for construction of the line, compounded the financial complications. On January 26, 1914, the property was sold at an auction sale conducted by the Anoka County sheriff at the courthouse.

Optimism continued to prevail. On February 10, 1914, it was announced that an extension of the line northward to Ogilvie (60 miles) in Kanabec County as well as to points along the northwest shore of Lake Mille Lacs was being planned. The new company was listed as the Minneapolis, Mille

Lacs & Northern Ry. It was reported that an office was opened in St. Francis and that Marshall Roy, a Soo Line Ry. engineer was surveying the route. It was rumored that a small amount of grading was done in or near Anoka but nothing more was heard of the scheme.

A December, 1914, issue of the Anoka newspaper, discussing the line's problems, claimed that the passenger motor cars were the main source of trouble, actually refusing to operate. It was impossible to run trains on time and often not at all. It didn't help that a transfer was required to complete the trip and that the Anoka-Minneapolis travel time was considerably longer than on the GN or NP.

The officers of the M&N were held blameless; it was said that they had put forth every effort to accommodate the public. Finally on January 1, 1915, the M&N was forced into receivership. The trackage agreement with the Soo Line Ry. was to expire within a week and the contractors' liens were due on January 26th. Application was made to the Minnesota Railroad and Warehouse Commission to discontinue operations for the winter but permission was received to suspend operations for only 30 days. Consequently on January 26, 1915, the line became the property of the lien holders. Charles P. Bratnober purchased the equity of the other lien holders and became sole owner.

Minneapolis Anoka & Cuyuna Range Ry.

On February 12, 1915, Mr. Bratnober together with several officials of the M&N incorporated the Minneapolis, Anoka & Cuyuna Range Ry. Co.; on March 3rd the MA&CR acquired the M&N from Mr. Bratnober. It was announced that within the next year the company expected to extend the

line to the Cuyuna Range iron ore deposits. The first shipments of iron ore from this range, located near Crosby-Ironton, Minnesota, had been made during 1911.

As the financial difficulties of the M&N had resulted in lack of maintenance to the roadway, work began on rehabilitating the track with hopes of being able to electrify the line thereby operating streetcars over the Minneapolis Street Ry. into downtown Minneapolis. With completion of the

Time Table No. 17A—Effective December 1, 1923—Subject to change without notice.

ANOKA ELECTRIC LINE

Passenger Trains arrive at and depart from

Minneapolis
Union Electric Terminal
7th St.-2nd Av. N.

Anoka
Electric Line Depot
Main St.-1st Av.

Express and package freight is handled on all passenger trains. Deliver same at above stations or phone for information during business hours, Geneva 2470 or Anoka 35.

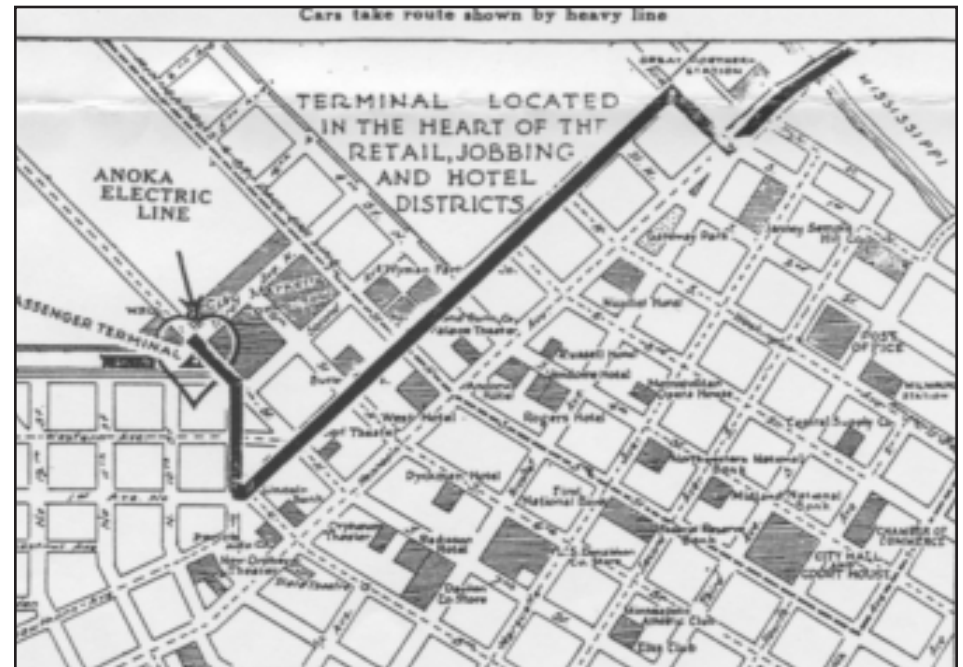
C. A. BRATNOBER,
A. A. KRANHOLD, Gen. Pass. Agt.
Supt.

MINNEAPOLIS, ANOKA AND
CUYUNA RANGE RAILWAY CO.



Coon Rapids Dam a source of electricity was available. The goal set for electrification was April 1, 1915, but it was soon learned that this was unrealistic.

In order to retain title to certain portions of the right-of-way it was found necessary to restore operations promptly. As all three gasoline-



mechanical motor cars had been repossessed by the McKeen Motor Car Co. because they had not been paid for, a used steam locomotive and one passenger coach were purchased. A water tank and coal storage bin were installed at the Anoka wye.

The steam locomotive was acquired from the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha Ry. and given the number 1. It had been built by the Baldwin Locomotive Works in 1881. Steam operations began on April 6, 1915, with five daily round trips being operated. Because of Anoka ordinances the steam locomotive could not operate on city streets; apparently this also precluded use of the wye, or perhaps the curvature radius was too short for the locomotive, for the train ran forward to Minneapolis and backward to Anoka. Passengers had to walk "downtown" from the wye at 7th Ave. and Main St. in Anoka. Presumably the train operated over

the Soo Line Ry. trackage to Camden Place.

Erection of the overhead trolley wire began during the summer of 1915. Construction of the track connection with the "2nd St. N.E." line of Minneapolis Street Ry. was begun; this ran from the Soo Line Ry. connection at 34th Ave. N. E. and Marshall St., along-side Marshall St. to 30th Ave. N.E. and on 30th to the MSR wye at 30th and Grand St. N. E. It was announced that the electrification planned for two hour service on weekdays and one hour service on Sundays from 6:00 A.M. to midnight; maximum speed would be 30 m.p.h., an average of four stops per mile would be made, and two passenger cars would be used in normal operation with a third car available for extra service.

The last steam passenger operation took place on Friday, October 8, 1915. The electric cars began running Saturday, October 9th, the regular



Above: Builder's photo of MA&CR #1 on the Snelling Shops turntable in 1915.
Below right: McGuire Cummings builder's photo of freight motor #5 in 1916.

service being seven daily round trips starting at 6:40 A.M. from Anoka. Streetcars were rented from Minneapolis Street Ry. for this initial service; one car at a time was operated from a pool of three cars, 1516, 1714, and 1717, which had been fitted with destination roll signs reading "Minneapolis & Anoka". A ticket and express office and waiting station was established at 517 2nd Ave. So. in downtown Minneapolis; the trackage rights over which the cars operated consisted of the "2nd St. N. E." line tracks to Central Ave. (now E. Hennepin Ave.) - Hennepin Ave. - High St. - Marquette Ave. (originally 1st Ave. So.) - 6th St. - 2nd Ave. So. - Washington Ave. - Marquette - High St. and return via same route as inbound trips. On October 22nd 6,000 persons gathered in Anoka to celebrate the advent of streetcars.

Electricity was purchased from the Minneapolis General Electric Co. (which subsequently became part of

Northern States Power Co.). One Westinghouse 300 KW rotary converter purchased in 1915 was installed at NSP's Coon Rapids Dam plant. A second Westinghouse 300 KW rotary converter was purchased in 1916 and installed at NSP's Riverside plant in Minneapolis.

Four passenger motor cars were ordered from the Twin City Rapid Transit Co.'s Snelling Shops. Two cars were completed in December, 1915. #1 was a standard TCRT class L-8 except that the front platform was specially arranged for a baggage-mail-freight compartment. The front bulkhead was constructed two windows to the rear of its normal location and a specially designed baggage door-motorman's door combination utilized. #2 was a standard TCRT class L-8 furnished without alteration.

Two passenger motor cars were purchased secondhand from a Cleveland, Ohio, dealer, also in 1915. They were assigned MA&CR numbers 3 and 4.

These two cars had been originally built as open motor cars by the G. C. Kuhlman Co. in 1902 for the Cleveland Rys. They were rebuilt by the Cleveland Rys. in 1910 to closed cars with long enclosed platforms. It appears they might have been Cleveland Rys. 23 (ex 355) and 29 (ex 365). Details were: length overall 47'1", length of body 34', length of each platform 6', width 8'1", wooden underframe, seating capacity 26 persons, and weight about 19 tons. Other equipment acquired during 1915 included: #1, a single truck, double nose snow plow acquired second hand.

MA&CR pursued freight traffic at an early date. The track on Main St. in Anoka was extended into an industrial area adjacent to the Pillsbury-Washburn Flour Mills Co.'s Lincoln Mill and several spur tracks constructed to local industries. In June, 1916, a depot-office building of brick construction was completed on 1st Ave. between Main St. and Jackson St., just south of a temporary structure. The June 21, 1916, issue of the Anoka newspaper was giving MA&CR a bad time for running freight cars through the streets at any hour, day or night, even Sundays. Apparently the steam locomotive was used to haul freight cars from Minneapolis to Anoka, while the

switching through the streets was done with electric equipment - probably with the snow plow used as a locomotive. However on July 4, 1916, a brand new electric freight motor car was received from the McGuire-Cummings Mfg. Co. Assigned MA&CR #5, it was a double end, arch roof. It was used for switching in Anoka as well as for hauling freight trains between Anoka and Minneapolis. In addition LCL freight express, 4th class mail, milk and cream were carried in the car itself.

Other equipment acquired during 1916 consisted of the following.

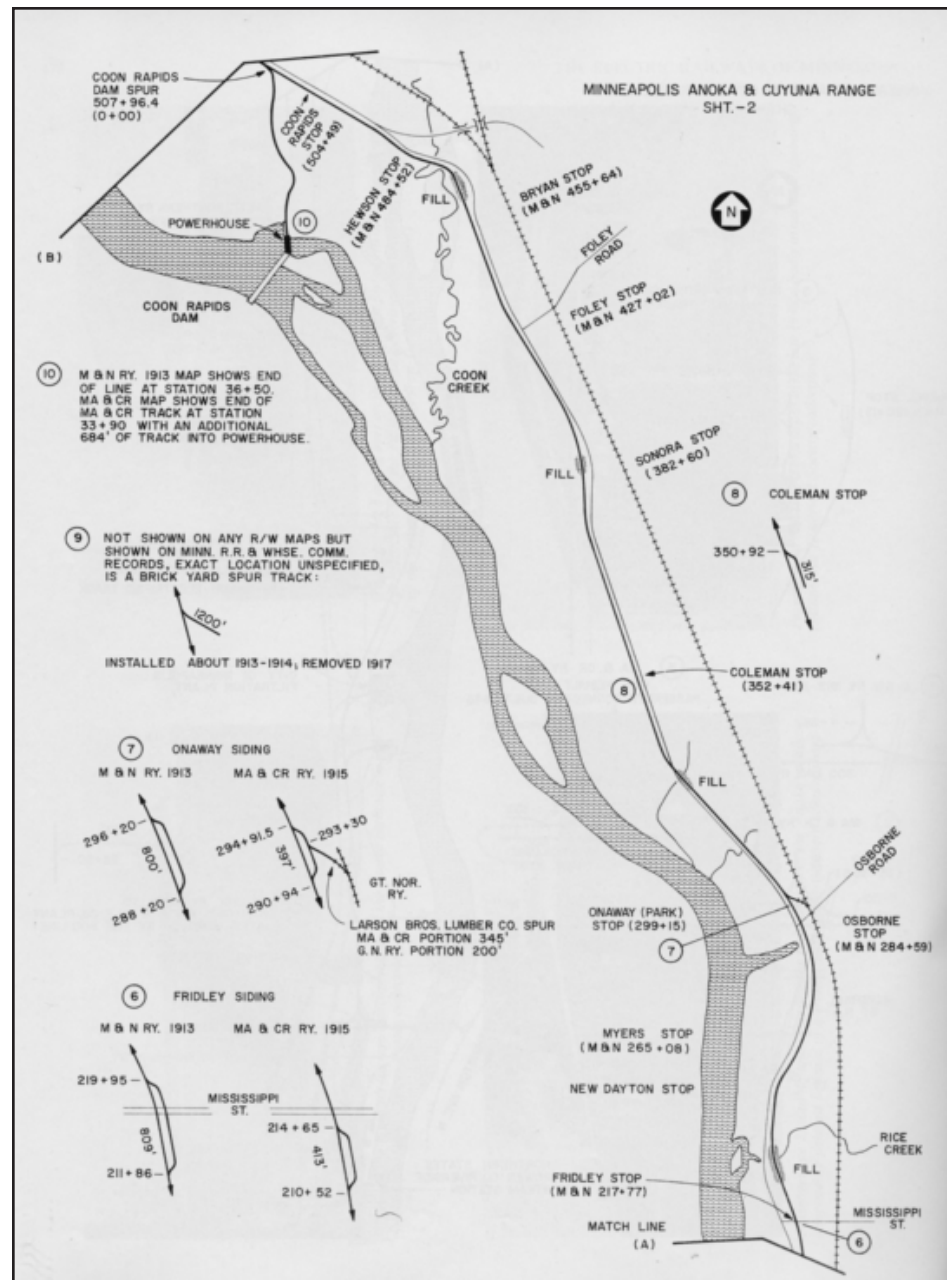
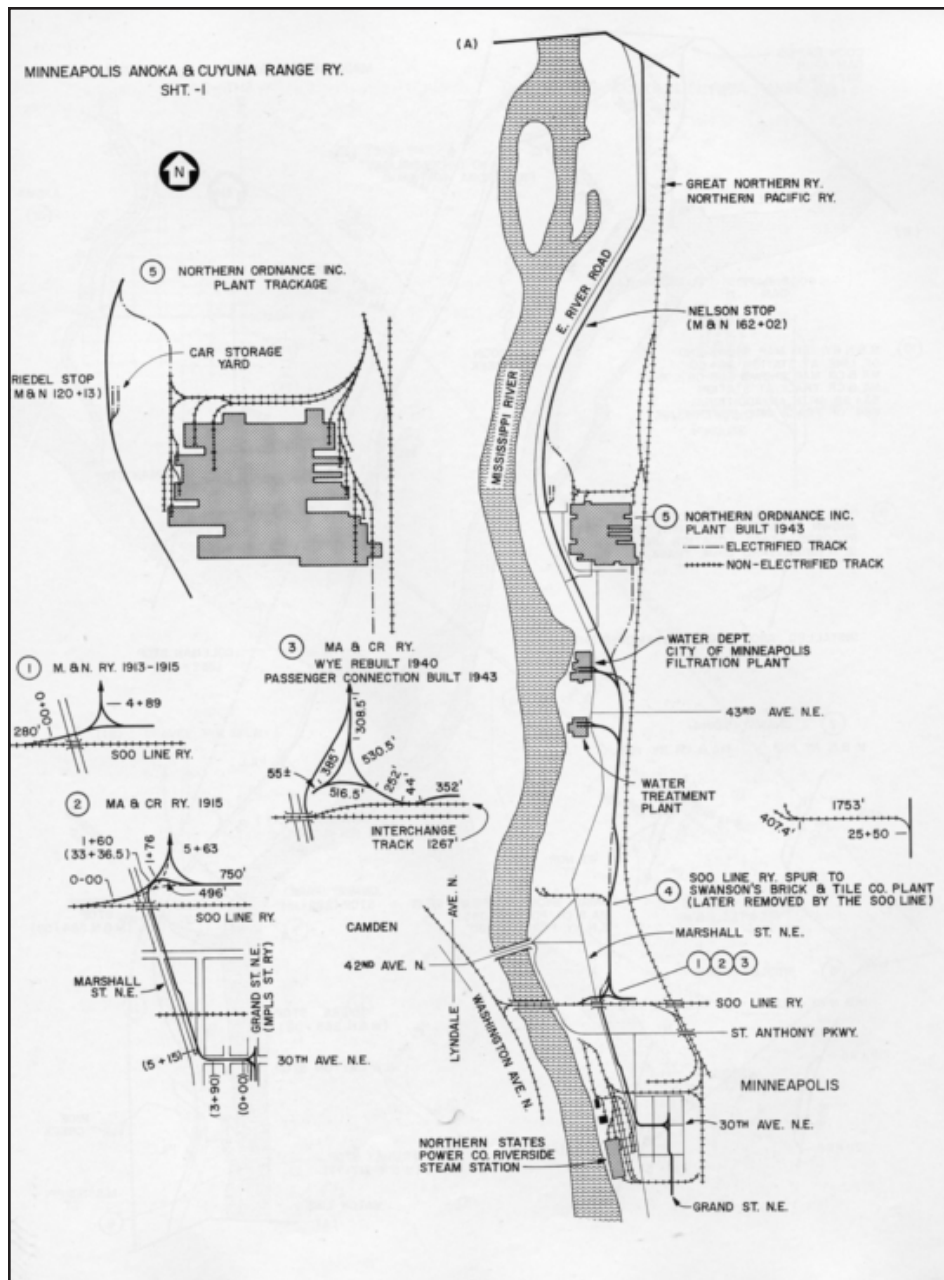
#6 passenger motor car acquired in Cleveland, Ohio, identical to cars 3 and 4, probably ex-Cleveland Rys. 369.

#7 passenger motor car, ex Twin City Rapid Transit Co. 1713, built November 18, 1914 and acquired by MA&CR on July 3, 1916. This was a standard TCRT class L-8 car, but TCRT was requested to rebuild the front bulkhead one window to the rear of its normal location to accommodate mail and baggage; however it was actually rebuilt identical in appearance to #1.

101 Flat Trailer was acquired second-hand. It was 35' long.

Thus equipment at this time included 6 passenger cars (1-4 and 6-7), one steam locomotive (1), one electric locomotive (freight motor car 5) and one





service motor car (snow plow 1).

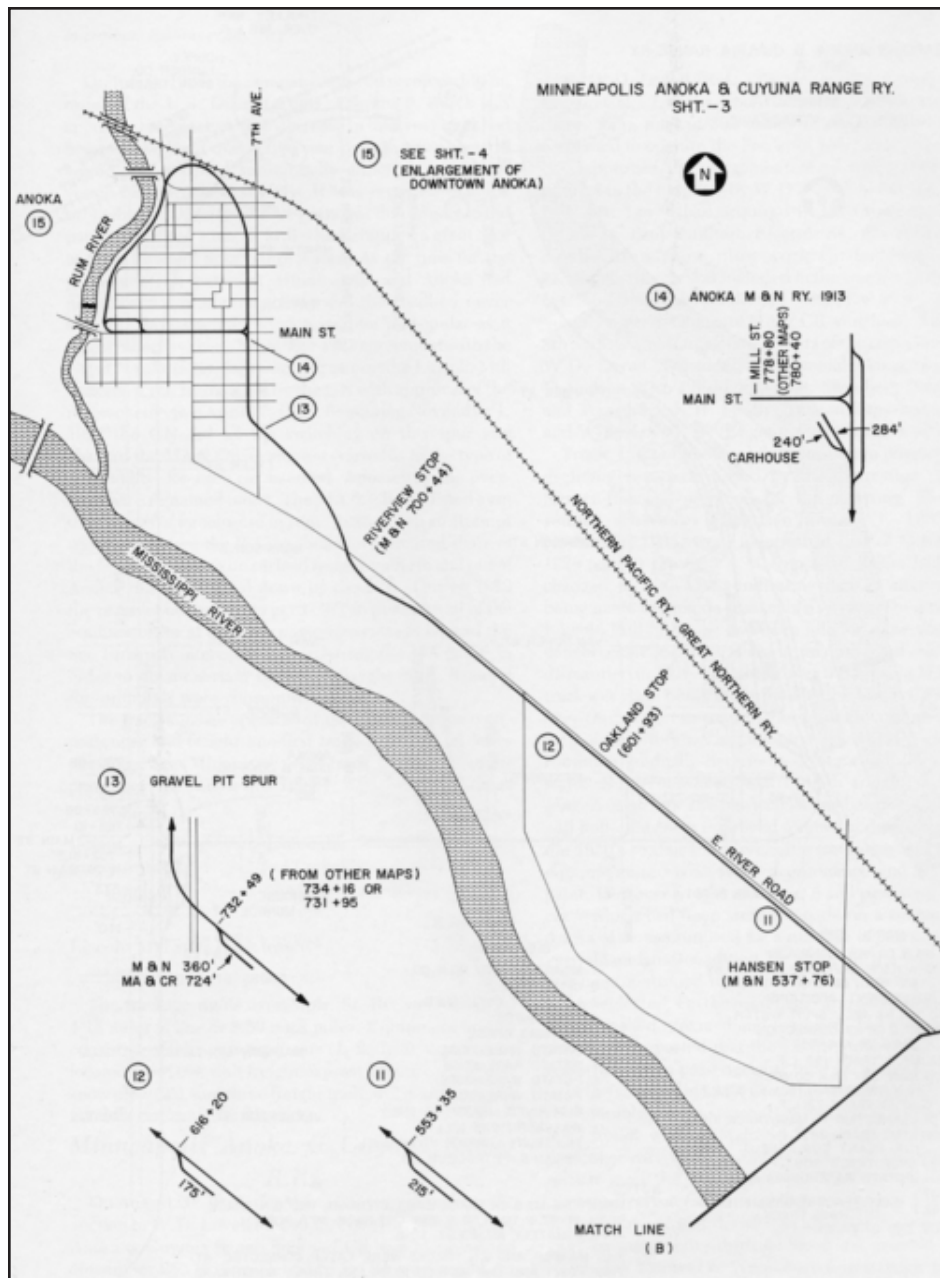
Additional trackage was constructed in Anoka on 3rd Ave. and Jackson St., about .25 miles of track, to create an around-the-block turn loop for

northbound cars ending at the depot. All southbound cars departed from the depot and proceeded directly up Main St.

Additional public and private flag

These sectional maps first appeared in Electric Railways of Minnesota and show the MA&CR from its TCRT connection in northeast Minneapolis to Anoka.

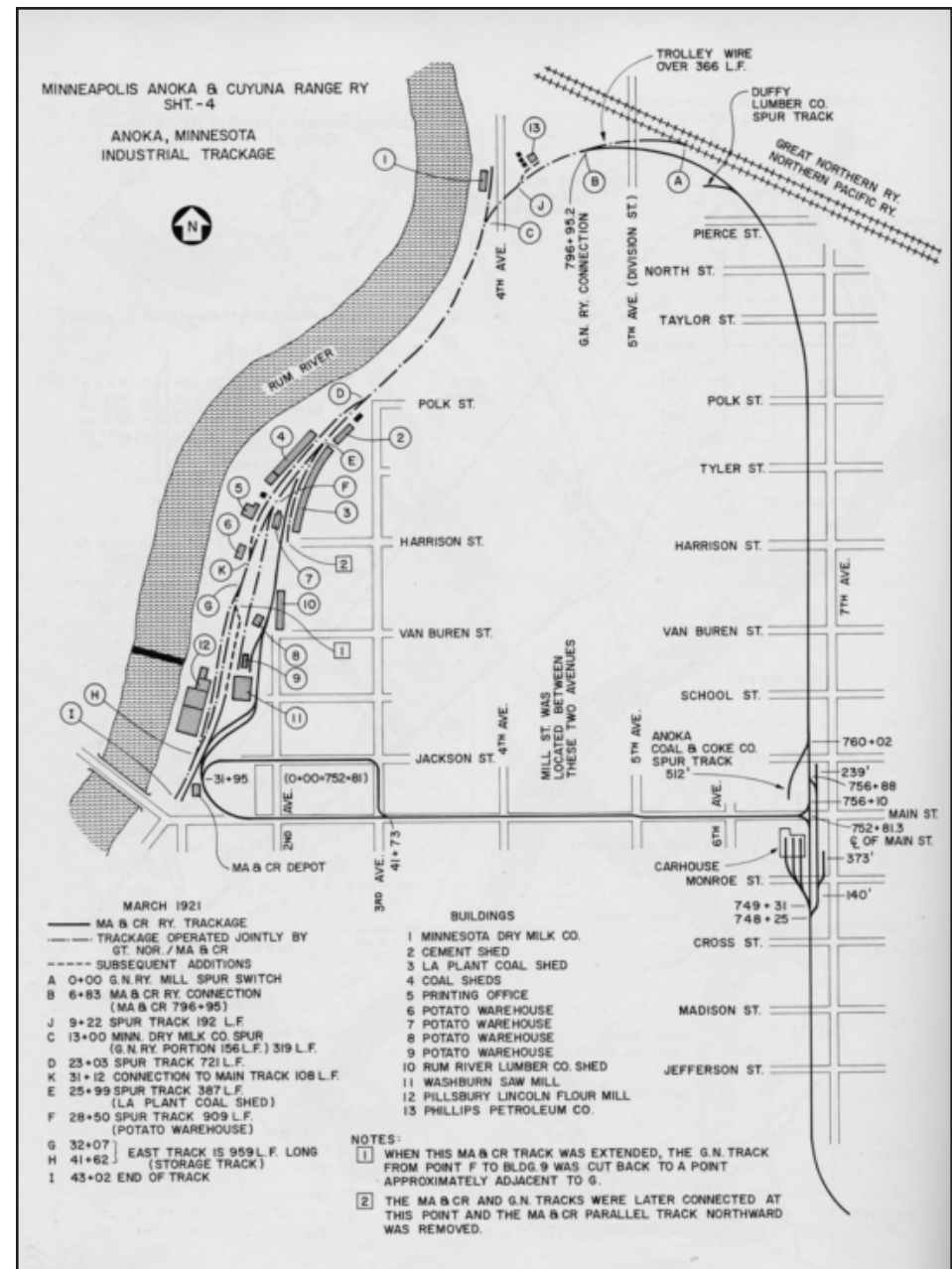
stops brought the total number of passenger stops to about sixty. Analysis of the November 11, 1917 timetable reveals that the overall schedule speed was about 17 miles per hour; the



schedule speed on the right-of-way between Oak Grove and Riverview was 28 miles per hour; all of this indicates the effects of slow street running in Minneapolis and few stops in the

sparsely-populated rural area.

Twin City Rapid Transit Co. passenger equipment was often rented for special occasions to handle increased



Detail of the MA&CR facilities in Anoka. The car barn was located at 7th Avenue and Main Street. The freight loop extended around the north side of town. Passenger cars used Main Street and looped via Jackson Street. The depot was located next to the Rum River bridge.



Above: Crew members at the Anoka depot. Anoka County Historical Society collection
Above right: Despite what the caption says, this view looks west on Main Street from 2nd Street. Cook-Montgomery Co. photo.

Below right: Passengers cars approached the Anoka depot on Jackson Street, a block north of Main Street. Minnesota Historical Society collection.



passenger traffic. One such annual event was Minnesota State Fair Week when cars were run through to the Fairgrounds in St. Paul from Anoka. TCRT's East Side Station trackage was used to route MA&CR cars between the "2nd St. N. E." line and the "Como-Harriet" line.

Directories of the period indicate MA&CR's general office was located in Anoka but that an office was also maintained at 4200 Washington Ave. N., Minneapolis, for several years.

The Lincoln Mill of the Pillsbury-Washburn Flour Mills Co. in Anoka was served by a spur track .8 mile long from the joint Great Northern Ry.-Northern Pacific Ry. main line, which was built in 1879. A map dated December, 1916, furnished to the Minnesota Railroad and Warehouse

Commission showed a proposed connection from MA&CR's Anoka wye northward to a connection with the Lincoln Mill spur track near the point the latter branched off the GN Ry. main line. The June 6, 1917, issue of the Anoka newspaper reported that the MA&CR was extending its track north from 6th Ave. and Main St. over old abandoned N.P. Ry. right-of-way to connect with the Lincoln Mill spur track where it left the N.P.-GN Ry. main line. The article also stated that the electric line was to handle all switching on the spur track; the steam railroads would no longer operate over it. This was also supposed to eliminate the running of freight cars on Main St. The connection was completed but both MA&CR and the GN Ry. operated over the spur track, each per-



SAVE TIME AND TROUBLE BY PAYING BEFORE BOARDING CARS AT ANOKA OR MINNEAPOLIS—BUY A ROUND TRIP FOR 65 CENT

MINNEAPOLIS TO ANOKA

NORTHBOUND		Forenoon						Saturday Only	Except Saturday	Saturday Only	Afternoon				Saturday Only
LEAVE	Miles	1	3	5	7	9	11	11	11	11	13	15	17	19	
MINNEAPOLIS—															
Terminal—7th St. N.....	.00	7:00	8:00	9:30	11:00	1:00	2:30	3:00	4:00	5:00	6:00	8:30	11:10		
G. N. Union Depot.....	.35	7:03	8:03	9:33	11:03	1:03	2:33	3:03	4:03	5:03	6:03	8:33	11:13		
20th and Grand N. E.....	4.05	7:20*	8:20	9:50	11:20	1:20	2:50	3:20	4:20	5:20	6:20	8:50	11:30		
34th and Marshall N. E.....	4.75	7:31	8:29	9:53	11:23	1:23	2:53	3:23	4:23	5:23	6:23	8:53	11:33		
Arrive Oak Grove.....	5.96	7:34	8:32	10:01	11:31	1:31	3:01	3:31	4:31	5:31	6:31	9:01	11:41		
Edgewater.....	6.22	7:38	8:33	10:03	11:32	1:32	3:02	3:32	4:32	5:32	6:32	9:02	11:42		
Riedel.....	7.06	7:57	8:50	10:04	11:34	1:34	3:04	3:34	4:34	5:34	6:34	9:04	11:44		
Nelson.....	7.55	7:59	8:37	10:06	11:36	1:36	3:06	3:36	4:36	5:36	6:36	9:06	11:46		
FRIDLEY.....	8.55	7:41	8:25*	10:03*	11:33	1:33	3:03*	3:33	4:33	5:33	6:33	9:03	11:43		
New Dayton.....	9.62	7:42	8:41	10:11	11:25	1:40	3:09	3:40	4:40	5:40	6:40	9:10	11:45		
Myers.....	9.79	7:43	8:43	10:12	11:40	1:40	3:10	3:41	4:41	5:41	6:41	9:11	11:47		
Osawaw Park.....	10.45	7:44	8:44	10:12	11:41	1:41	3:11	3:42	4:42	5:42	6:42	9:12	11:48		
Coleman.....	11.45	7:46	8:47	10:16	11:45	1:45	3:14	3:45	4:45	5:45	6:45	9:13	11:49		
Foley.....	12.86	7:49	8:50	10:19	11:48	1:48	3:17	3:48	4:48	5:48	6:48	9:15	11:52		
Bryan.....	13.40	7:51	8:52	10:21	11:50	1:50	3:19	3:50	4:50	5:50	6:50	9:18	11:55		
COON RAPIDS.....	14.32	7:54	8:55	10:24	11:53	1:53	3:22	3:53	4:53	5:53	6:53	9:22	11:58		
Hanson.....	14.95	7:55	8:56	10:25	11:54	1:54	3:23	3:54	4:54	5:54	6:54	9:24	11:59		
Oakland.....	16.20	7:58	8:59	10:28	11:57	1:57	3:26	3:57	4:57	5:58	6:58	9:27	12:02		
Riverview.....	18.02	8:01	9:02	10:32	12:01	2:00	3:30	4:01	5:01	6:02	7:02	9:30	12:07		
ANOKA.....	19.52	8:03	9:10	10:35	12:03	2:03	3:33	4:03	5:03	6:04	7:04	9:33	12:10		

ANOKA TO MINNEAPOLIS

SOUTHBOUND		Forenoon										Saturday Only	Except Saturday	Saturday Only	Afternoon				Saturday Only
LEAVE	Miles	2	4	6	8	10	12:12	12	12:12	14	16	18	20						
ANOKA— Electric Line Depot.....	.00	3:30	6:40	8:10	9:40	11:40	1:10	1:40	2:40	3:40	4:40	7:10	9:30						
Riverview.....	1.45	5:57	6:47	8:17	9:47	11:47	3:37	4:07	5:07	6:07	7:07	9:37	11:57						
Oakland.....	2.95	6:01	6:51	8:21	9:51	11:51	3:51	4:21	5:21	6:21	7:21	9:51	12:11						
Hanson.....	4.07	6:04	6:54	8:24	9:54	11:54*	3:54	4:24	5:24	6:24	7:24	9:54	12:14						
COON RAPIDS.....	5.17	6:05	6:55	8:25	9:55	11:55	3:55	4:25	5:25	6:25	7:25	9:55	12:15						
Bryan.....	6.12	6:08	6:58	8:28	9:58	11:58	3:58	4:28	5:28	6:28	7:28	9:58	12:18						
Foley.....	6.66	6:10	7:00	8:30	10:00	12:00	3:59	4:29	5:29	6:29	7:29	9:59	12:19						
Coleman.....	8.04	6:12	7:02	8:32	10:02	12:02	3:59	4:29	5:29	6:29	7:29	9:59	12:19						
Osawaw Park.....	9.04	6:16	7:06	8:36	10:06	12:06	3:59	4:29	5:29	6:29	7:29	9:59	12:19						
Myers.....	9.79	6:17	7:07	8:37	10:07	12:07	3:59	4:29	5:29	6:29	7:29	9:59	12:19						
New Dayton.....	9.96	6:18	7:08	8:38	10:08	12:08	3:59	4:29	5:29	6:29	7:29	9:59	12:19						
FRIDLEY.....	10.62	6:20	7:10	8:40	10:10	12:10	3:59	4:29	5:29	6:29	7:29	9:59	12:19						
Hanson.....	11.67	6:22	7:12	8:42	10:12	12:12	3:59	4:29	5:29	6:29	7:29	9:59	12:19						
Oakland.....	12.46	6:24	7:14	8:44	10:14	12:14	3:59	4:29	5:29	6:29	7:29	9:59	12:19						
Edgewater.....	13.46	6:26	7:16	8:46	10:16	12:16	3:59	4:29	5:29	6:29	7:29	9:59	12:19						
Oak Grove.....	13.56	6:27	7:17	8:47	10:17	12:17	3:59	4:29	5:29	6:29	7:29	9:59	12:19						
Arrive 34th & Marshall N. E.....	14.74	6:30	7:20	8:50	10:20	12:20	3:59	4:29	5:29	6:29	7:29	9:59	12:19						
30th & Grand N. E.....	15.44	6:33	7:23	8:53	10:23	12:23	3:59	4:29	5:29	6:29	7:29	9:59	12:19						
G. N. Union Depot.....	16.57	6:36	7:26	8:56	10:26	12:26	3:59	4:29	5:29	6:29	7:29	9:59	12:19						
20th & Grand N. E.....	19.52	6:55	7:45	9:15	10:45	12:45	3:59	4:29	5:29	6:29	7:29	9:59	12:19						

* Indicates meets daily. * Saturdays only. ‡ Except Saturdays.

‡ Sunday service in effect on the following holidays: New Year's; Decoration Day; July Fourth; Thanksgiving; and Christmas Day.

‡ Saturday service in effect the day before each of the above holidays.

‡ Cars stop on signal at all points whether or not time is shown. Where time is not shown, same is to be figured on basis of standard running time, as shown on other trips.

The time shown is that at which trains may be expected to arrive at and depart from the several stations but this company will not be responsible for errors in this time table nor does it guarantee the arrival or departure of trains at times stated.

This 1923 timetable gives a detailed view of passenger service when the company was still profitable. There are double lines around Fridley and Coon Rapids because those were sidings where cars were scheduled to meet on the single track.

forming its own switching. It is not known whether the spur track was electrified at this time or MA&CR used its steam locomotive for switching.

As business increased additional

equipment was purchased. During the 1917-1919 period the following cars were added to the roster.



1917

#1 Snow Plow was damaged in an accident and subsequently scrapped. Three flat trailers were acquired second-hand. #102 and 103 were 37' long. #502, later re-numbered 104, was 28' long. One passenger motor car and one snow plow were acquired second hand from Twin City Rapid Transit Co. in one transaction.

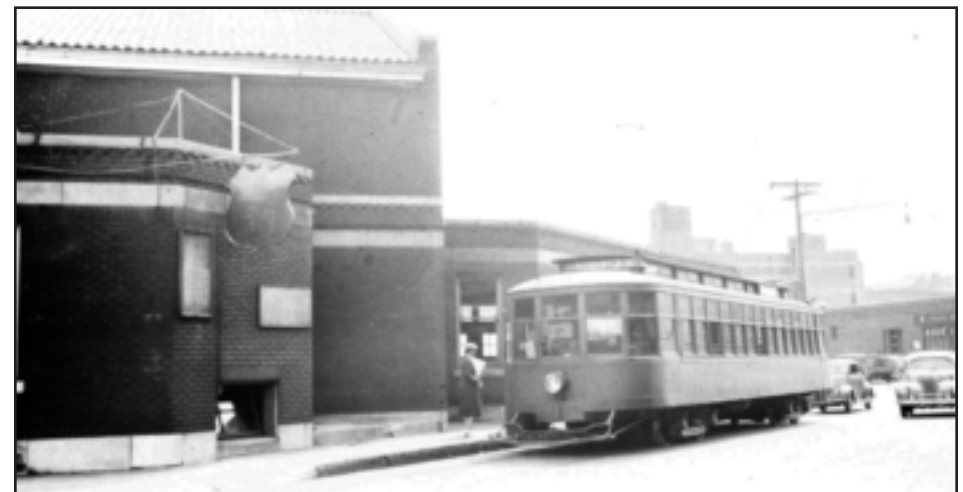
#8 passenger motor car, ex-TCRT 1855 built June 28, 1917, was acquired November 20, 1917, at a cost of \$8,777.36. This was a standard TCRT class L-8 which was furnished without alteration.

#25 snow plow, ex-TCRT 25 built

The Anoka Line shared a depot at 7th Street, Holden Street and 3rd Avenue N. with the Dan Patch and Luce Line trains. The top left view looks west on Holden. Hennepin County Library collection.

Below left: Looking east with the Butler Building in the background in this 1950s view. The depot site disappeared under I-394 and the huge 7th Street parking garage. Norm Podas photo.

Below right: The Anoka cars wye'd out and backed down to the 3rd Avenue side of the depot to load.





1930s scenes along the line.
Above: Alongside Marshall Street NE, about to pass under the Soo Line.

Above right: The Onaway siding in Fridley. Herman Rinke photo

Below right: A different unidentified siding.





Above: At the Anoka depot.

Below left and right: Although the MA&CR soldiered on through the 1930s, track maintenance was deferred and the ride was rough. Freight trains were hard on the 56-pound rail and derailments were common, like the one on the opposite page.



1918

#101 flat trailer was rebuilt to a gondola trailer. Sideboards were installed on 103 flat trailer. 104 flat trailer was returned to the seller.

1919

Six air-operated side-dump trailers were acquired second-hand: #1-6 had been built in 1915 by the Western Wheel & Scraper Co. #1 and #2 section car trailers were acquired new from Fairbanks-Morse Co.

Passenger car 3 was rebuilt into an express motor car.

Although it was reported in 1917 that MA&CR was to perform all switching on the Lincoln Mill spur track in Anoka, this did not actually come about until April 5, 1921, when the MA&CR entered into an agreement with the GN Ry. Since both companies had obtained from the Pillsbury-Washburn Flour Mills Co. the right to operate over the spur track, to avoid duplication of switching movements it was agreed MA&CR would do the switching for both companies. GN was to pay the MA&CR

November 22, 1904, was to be repaired and placed in good serviceable condition by TCRT. The car was received by MA&CR in early 1918. This car had a platform on the roof for use as a line car as well.



\$2.25 per car, loaded or empty, per round trip. Apparently at this time MA&CR electrified the Lincoln Mill spur trackage.

On March 6, 1922, further agreements were entered into affecting operation of the Lincoln Mill spur track. Since the right-of-way was owned by the Pillsbury-Washburn Flour Mills Co. and the rails and fastenings by the Great Northern Ry., it was agreed between Pillsbury and the GN that Pillsbury would purchase the rails and fastenings. Pillsbury was also to acquire the rails and fastenings of the spur tracks owned by the MA&CR

and connect them with the GN track. Both GN and MA&CR were to have the right to operate over both tracks.

Also on March 6, 1922 Pillsbury entered into an agreement with MA&CR to purchase the rails and fastenings of spur tracks constructed by MA&CR on right-of-way owned by Pillsbury. The purchase price was \$4,117.00. Since MA&CR had equipped both its spur tracks and the GN Lincoln Mill spur tracks with electric overhead wires and was switching all cars by electric locomotive, provision was made for payment by MA&CR to Pillsbury for the privilege

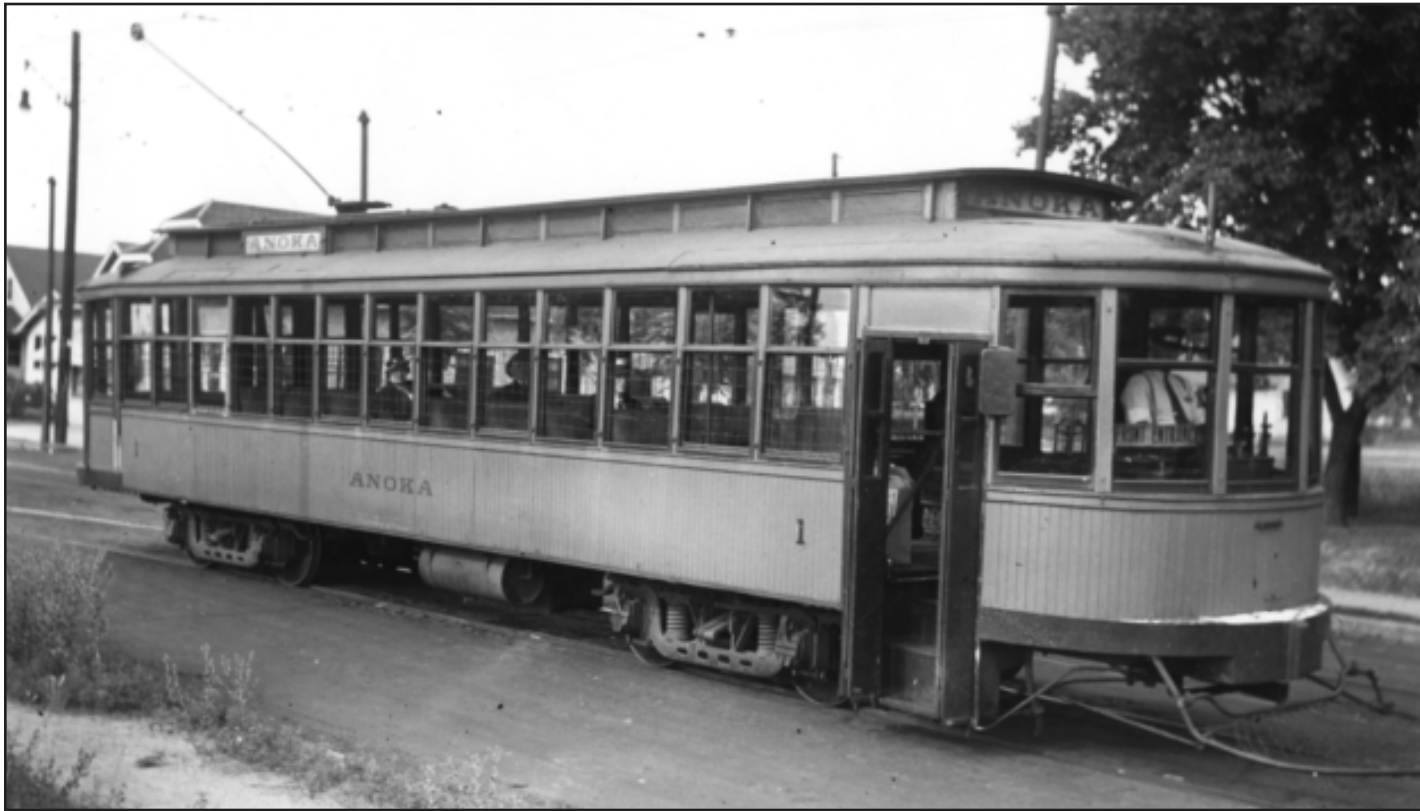
of installing and maintaining the overhead poles and line as well as for the right to use the tracks. MA&CR was to repair and maintain the tracks at its own expense. MA&CR was also to switch all the cars over the spur tracks.

In 1922 the company purchased electric freight locomotive #100 from the Central Warehouse Co. of St. Paul. This locomotive had been built by the General Electric Co. in 1913 as a gasoline-electric locomotive for the Minneapolis, St. Paul, Rochester & Dubuque Electric Traction Co. (Dan Patch Electric Lines). It was sold in 1917 to the Central Warehouse Co.

who subsequently converted it to straight electric operation by removing the gasoline motors and electric generators and replacing the lost weight with concrete flooring in the under-frame. 100 was used to switch cars on the Lincoln Mill spur track while both freight motor car 5 and 100 were used to haul freight trains between Minneapolis and Anoka.

Effective January 1, 1923, the downtown Minneapolis terminal was moved to the Electric Short Line Terminal Co. depot at 3rd Ave. N. and 7th St. N. which was also used by the Minneapolis, Northfield & Southern Ry. and the Electric Short Line Ry. (later Minnesota Western Ry.). TCRT constructed a wye on the northwest side of the building from its trackage on 7th St. N. The trackage rights were changed to: E. Hennepin Ave. - 1st St. N. - 1st Ave. N. - 8th St. N. - 7th St. N. to the depot, then wye and return via the same route.

In 1923 passenger cars 4 and 6 were retired and air operated side-dump trailers 1-6 were sold. Dump trailer 2 which had been sold to the Electric Short Line Ry. was returned by them in 1924. Steam locomotive 1 was disposed of in 1924. Declining passenger revenues prompted the conversion of certain passenger cars to one-man operation. TCRT was requested to make conversion but as MA&CR was short of funds the instructions were to use the utmost economy in rebuilding the cars. During 1925 cars 2 and 8 were rebuilt; #2: front entrance-exit doors were installed (the same type as used on TCRT's front exit cars) and the rear steps and wire gates removed being replaced with a fully enclosed platform with doors for freight and express loading and unloading; #8: front entrance-exit doors were installed as on #2 but the rear steps and wire gates were retained.



In 1926 passenger car 1 was also rebuilt for one-man operation by TCRT in the identical manner as 2 although the front bulkhead was not altered. (Passenger car 7 was never rebuilt for one-man operation.) Also in 1926 express motor car (rebuilt passenger car) 3 and flat trailer 103 were retired.

A good description of the extent of freight operations during the middle 1920's has been obtained from ICC records. The principal commodities handled were:

Wheat and wheat products (comprising about 50% of the interstate freight traffic of MA&CR); wheat came from Minneapolis and Duluth consigned to the Lincoln Mill. After milling it was re-shipped to Chicago, Omaha and Duluth.

Building materials: cement, rock, stone and sand. Inbound cars of cement came from Mason City and Duluth; petroleum from Oklahoma, Texas, and Wyoming; coal from the C. B. & Q. Ry. at W. Frankfort, Ill., L. & N. Ry. in Illinois and W. Kentucky, and from the Soo Line Ry. at Duluth; ammunition: from Anoka to Watertown, S.D., and St. Louis, Mo.; and from Omaha to Anoka; lumber from Washington, Oregon, Idaho, British Columbia; Fort Francis, Ontario, and Bemidji, Minn.; potatoes to Chicago and Memphis; brass from Kenosha, Wisc., and Alton, Ill.

About 85% of its freight traffic was interstate in nature; very little local freight traffic was handled. Some figures are available for two years:

	1925	1926
Inbound carloads	1501	2113
Outbound carloads	1211	947
Total carloads	2712	3278

Principal competitors were the Great Northern Ry. and the truck and bus lines which operated between Minneapolis and Anoka. Railroad interchange connections were located at Minneapolis (Soo Line Jct.) with the Soo Line, Osborne with the Great

As ridership dropped during the 1920s, MA&CR got rid of conductors and converted its cars to 1-person operation. The rear gates were closed off and the baggage section was moved from the front to the rear. The passenger entrance shifted to a new front folding door. Frank Butts photo.

Northern, and Anoka with the Great Northern and Northern Pacific; running rights over other railroad trackage included about 1 mile over the Soo Line near Soo Line Jct., Lincoln Mill spur track of the Pillsbury Flour Mills Co. in Anoka, 1.72 miles of track (This track connected with the Great Northern which also had running rights over it.); and MA&CR owned nine sidings plus a spur track at Coon Rapids which extended to the dam and plant of the Northern States Power Co.

Express and mail were carried on the passenger cars. Express consisted of packages not over 100 lbs. in weight and were delivered store-door by MA&CR, all for a maximum charge of 25 cents per hundredweight. An employee stated that an occasional car of livestock was handled to and/or from Mr. Bratnober's farm north of Coon Rapids.

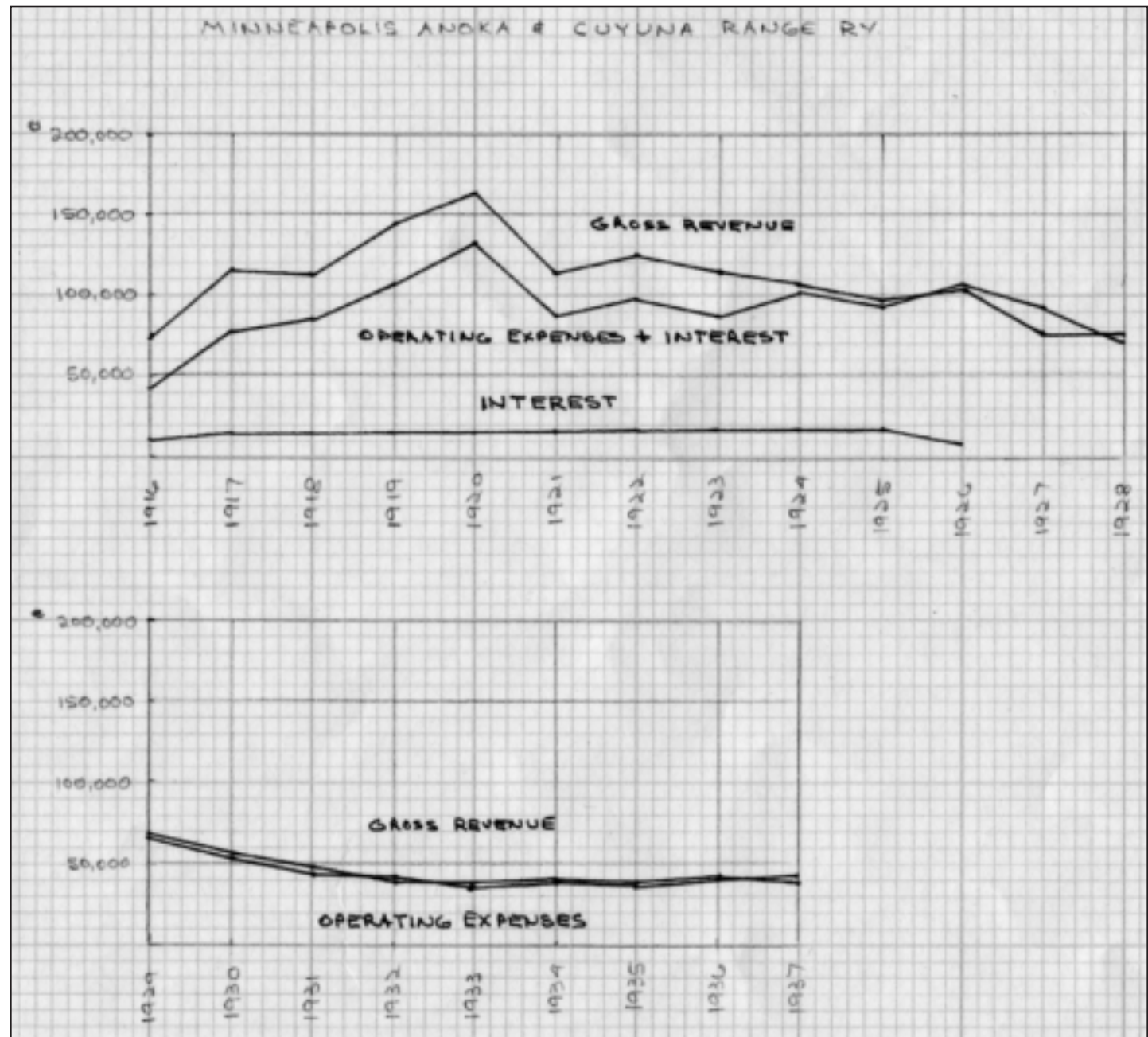
On July 28, 1924 MA&CR entered into an agreement with the Minneapolis Belt Line Ry. (a part of the Great Northern Ry.) allowing a spur track to cross the MA&CR line into the new Minneapolis Water Filtration



Plant north of 43rd Ave. N. E. and Marshall St. On June 20, 1925, the two companies agreed to allow MA&CR to connect with this spur track and switch freight cars in and out of the plant. A water softening plant was constructed south of 43rd Ave. N.E. and Marshall St. which was served exclusively by an MA&CR spur track.

On July 9, 1926, the company entered receivership on order of the U.S. District Court. A 40% decrease in total revenues had been experienced over a five-year period; passenger revenue had declined substantially although freight revenue had increased slightly. It was reported that the profitable condition in earlier years was due largely to the patronage of the Lincoln Mill which shipped a great deal of grain into and flour out of Anoka. As the time for the passenger run between Minneapolis and Anoka had never been less than one hour and the roadbed never smooth, the passenger service was not as popular as it might otherwise have been.

The 1921 agreement with the Great Northern Ry. for switching cars on the Lincoln Mill spur track was terminated by the GN with approval of the receiver effective April 17, 1927. Beginning November 1, 1927 the GN did all the switching on this spur and charged the MA&CR an amount (varied as to the type of commodity) for each car handled. Apparently the overhead wire remained intact. The MA&CR was listed as in the process of foreclosure in June, 1928, when an attempt was made before the ICC to obtain an increased share of the freight revenues on carload freight traffic in and out of Anoka; this was turned down by the ICC. During 1929 the receiver attempted to get TCRT to purchase all of the equipment, or at least the passenger cars, as he said the Soo Line was interested in purchasing the



This table shows that MA&CR turned a reasonable profit through 1923, but thereafter barely broke even, entering receivership in 1926. Revenues declined even more with the onset of the Great Depression. Given the passenger competition from motor buses and the freight competition from the parallel Great Northern, it's remarkable that the line survived into World War II. Table by Russ Olson.



Left: Packages and other small shipments supplemented passenger revenues. William Money Penny photo.

Below: MA&CR passengers could transfer to Twin City Rapid Transit streetcars without paying an additional fare (see bottom left corner). MA&CR always had to economize, so note that this 1928 transfer has been recycled by marking it "1929".

MA&CR in order to obtain certain savings in freight rates. None of the proposals were consummated.

The trackage rights over Mpls. St. Ry. were listed as 4.15 miles of line or 8.30 track miles. Equipment owned consisted of four passenger cars (1, 2, 7, 8), one freight locomotive (100), one freight/express motor car (5), one snow plow (25), and three freight trailers (dump car 2, gondola car 101, and flat car 102).

Excerpt from 1925 Report for Saco & Biddeford Savings Institution

With revenues down and the company in receivership, consultants were dispatched to evaluate the financial and physical condition of the property. Here's an excerpt.

On the morning of November 9th we took the regular ten o'clock car on its inward trip, and found the same to be in very good condition as to neatness and appearance. On this trip 22 passengers were carried, about two tons of freight and a little express. The car is a one-man car, combination motorman and conductor in charge, and the employees we saw were very untidy in appearance.

The car was operated over the Twin City Traction Company lines to the city limits. Getting on the private right of way we found the rails, milled in 1901, in very poor condition, extreme need for welding at the joints, very apparent need for many tie replacements, as many were out to a depth of 1 1/2 inches. Space between the track for the most part was completely filled with weeds and grass, indicating lit-

tle maintenance of this nature for some time. The poles, brackets and wire appeared to be in fair condition; some need of a few pole replacements.

The running schedule is one hour and ten minutes, and the trip was made on time. It may be that the condition of the ties and rails is due to the fact that so much freight is hauled, and the heavy loading of cars is too much freight for the rails to carry, but this freight business is essential, as it seems to be the only paying revenue at the present time.

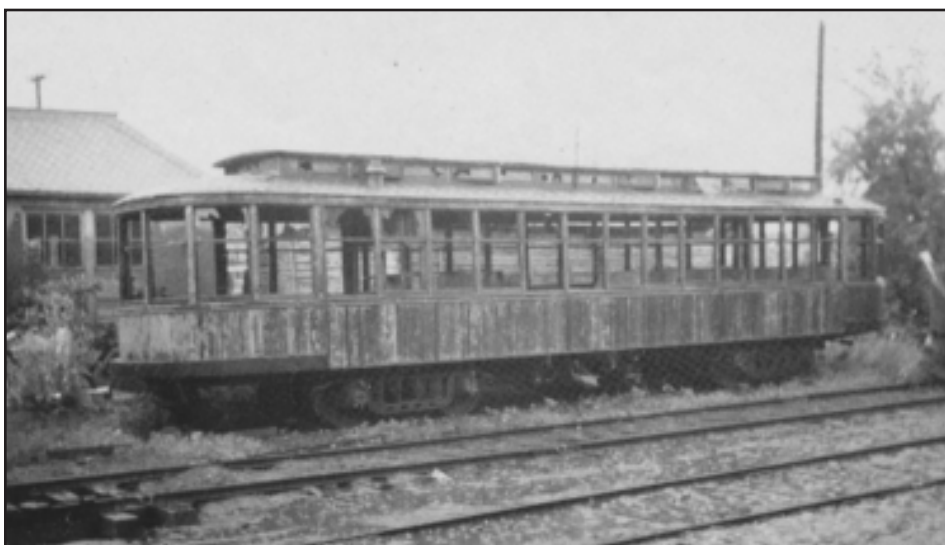
Minneapolis Anoka & Cuyuna Range R.R.

On August 20, 1929, the MA&CR was sold at a public auction to W.D. Lovell for \$35,000. The Minneapolis, Anoka & Cuyuna Range Railroad Co.

N												A. M.	P. M.	S
Dec												30th Ave. N. E.		
Nov												13th Ave. N. E.		
Oct												Emergency		
Sep														
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Rather than scrap unused equipment, the MA&CR kept it around, probably for the parts. That was the case with freight motor #105 (formerly #5), and car #7. Both are seen in derelict condition at the Anoka carhouse in the late 1930s. Top: Frank Butts photo.



was incorporated November 25, 1929 in Delaware for the purpose of acquiring and operating the property. The receiver continued to operate the line until May, 1930, when the ICC approved the assignment of all rights, title, and interest in the property to the MA&CR R.R.

Acquired in 1929 from the abandoned St. Paul Southern Electric Ry. was the TCRT-built combination snow plow-work car-locomotive becoming their 110. Old snow plow 25 was subsequently retired. Offices of MA&CR were located at 1415 8th St. S.E. in Minneapolis.

Truck, bus and automobile competition coupled with declining revenues caused by the depression created further financial problems for the company. The passenger schedules effective January 1, 1932 and November, 1935, were identical to that of October 7, 1928 indicating that an attempt was being made to provide reasonable service.

The Pillsbury Lincoln Mill in Anoka had been idle for some time (the date of cessation of operations is unknown) and was finally dismantled in 1932. Switching over the Lincoln Mill spur track was again being performed by the MA&CR. However the meager revenues afforded only a minimum of maintenance for road and equipment so that the physical condition gradually deteriorated into a sadly neglected state. Numerous derailments, both freight and passenger, occurred. The line's nickname became "Old Rock and Roll". Business improved somewhat during the middle 1930's so that the serviceable passenger and freight equipment received some maintenance and a coat of paint. However freight motor 5 and passenger motor 7 which had been stored outside on a siding at the Anoka carhouse, unused for a number of years, were in very dilapidated condition by 1937. In the

late 1930's revenues continued to decline so that maintenance was again neglected. The passenger cars' roofs often leaked, joints creaked, groaned and loosened, and on one occasion it was reported that the air compressor fell off the underframe onto an Anoka street.

In the summer of 1939, a tornado struck Anoka causing considerable damage, including destruction of the overhead trolley wire on Main St. It was reported that the passenger cars were routed over the Lincoln Mill spur track to reach the passenger depot. The company felt that passenger revenues were insufficient to justify rebuilding of the overhead and decided to abandon passenger service. Permission to substitute buses was granted by the Minnesota Railroad & Warehouse Commission and the last electric streetcar ran on August 23, 1939.

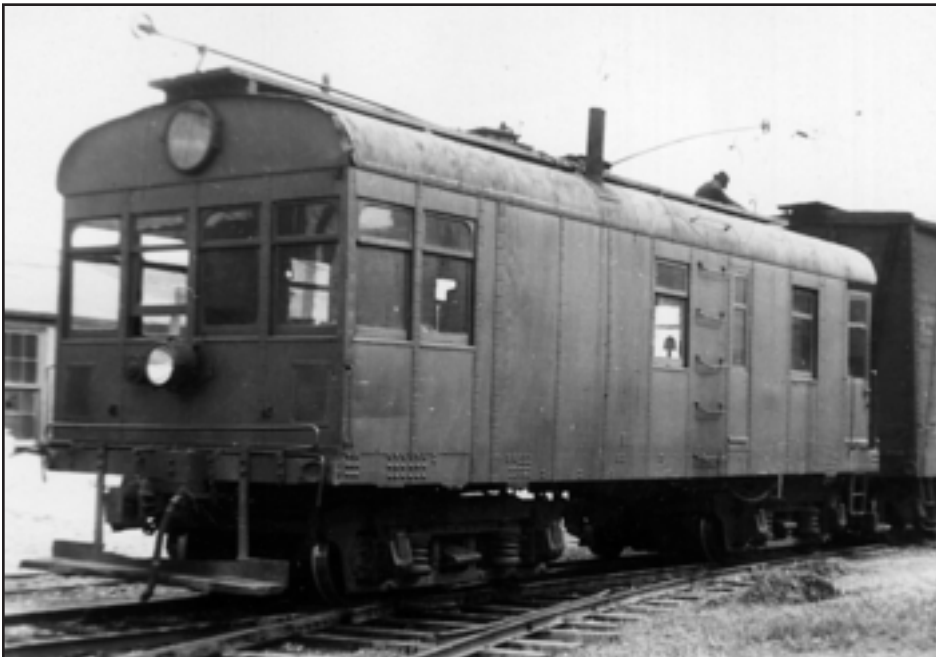
The next day MA&CR began operating two small buses on the East River Road. The passenger cars were placed in storage inside the Anoka carhouse. The passenger depot in Anoka was used for a construction office during the building of a new bridge over the Rum River and then was demolished in 1942.

Electric freight operations continued, however. Due to construction of a new bridge carrying the Soo Line Ry. tracks over Marshall St. N. E. in Minneapolis, the Soo Line trackage connecting the MA&CR track at that point had to be re-located during 1940. The City of Minneapolis ordered MA&CR to remove its track on 30th Ave. N.E. from Columbia Ave. to the TCRT wye within 30 days from October 11, 1940. The poor condition of MA&CR's track was also causing damage to steam railroad freight cars to such an extent that the Minnesota Railroad & Warehouse Commission placed speed restrictions on all freight



In the 1930s locomotive #100 was painted orange with green trim. As originally built in 1913 for the Dan Patch Line, both ends were the same as in the above photo. After a collision in 1914, the other end was squared off using windows designed for the company's gas-electric motor cars.

trains and ordered a mandatory program of cross-tie renewals. In 1942 snow plow-line car 110 was re-numbered 105 and a refrigerator car purchased from the Soo Line that year was assigned the number 110 for use as a work car and caboose. Thus at the beginning of World War II the



MA&CR was a decrepit freight-only interurban line.

From an August 1939 newspaper article "Saga of Last Anoka Car Ride"

"There's a lot of sentiment connected with the old red streetcars that rock along a set of wavy rails northward beyond the end of Marshall Street NE. We boarded at Third Avenue N. and Seventh Street. We were going to ride with Harry P. Armstrong, veteran motorman of the line. Mr. Armstrong was tossing cases of cartridges out the back end of the car onto a transfer truck. The shells from Anoka's Federal Cartridge company were part of his freight load.

Eight of us were about under Mr. Armstrong's care. Armstrong, meanwhile, was easing his car over the bumps and convolutions of the rails. "Right up here", he shouted over the clatter, "is a bad spot. Jump the track

here lots of times."

Armstrong continued, "There was a feller told how this passenger slid down the aisle on the seat of his pants and slammed up against the motorman's back."

Back in the car, taking the creaking jolts stoically. Mrs. A. A. Boyd of Anoka and Mrs. Maude Pogue reckon they were sorry to see the line go--"it's been of good service to us."

Mrs. John Beck who lives a mile and a half from Anoka has been riding the car nearly every day. "I guess I can take the bus just as well", she said.

Mrs. Mary Ebner of Anoka has been riding at least once a week. "It will be good to ride on something more modern", she said."

The Anoka Line-Part 2 will appear in the Summer 2020 issue. It will cover the period 1943 to 1966, when a shortened version of the line served Northern Ordinance and the war effort.



One of the buses that replaced the streetcars, seen in 1952.



Streetcar passenger service ended in August 1939 following a June 18 tornado that tore down the overhead wire on Anoka's Main Street. For awhile the cars reached the Anoka depot by detouring over the freight line around the north side of town. Minnesota Historical Society collection.



Having been purchased by Northern Ordnance for the war effort, the MA&CR north of today's I-694 was torn up in November 1943.

6000
1443



Southbound with a single freight car, locomotive #100 has just crossed East River Road (now Coon Rapids Blvd.). This was the Riverview stop, near the Anoka-Coon Rapids city limits.



MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM

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August 2021

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